

binge of the past which mortgages the future of America's most precious resource—her young people—because we are unwilling to exercise restraint needed to forego immediate gratification.

We have a solemn duty to provide a better world for future generations. Will Allen Dromgoole, in his poem "The Bridge Builder," describes an old man's effort to cross a river flowing through a vast, deep, and wide chasm. Even though the old man never had to repeat the treacherous journey, he built a bridge over the river. A fellow traveler asked the old man why he was wasting his strength building a bridge he would never use. The builder lifted his old gray head and responded:

There followeth after me today
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm, that has been naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him.

Mr. Chairman, I implore all Members to be like the selfless bridge builder and vote for this legislation which will build a bridge to a better world for those who follow.

THE 7 YEAR BALANCED BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2491) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 105 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1996:

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Chairman, I come to the well today to speak in favor of the Republican plan to allow seniors to increase their earnings without being penalized. Senior citizens made this country strong with their long and arduous labors year in and year out. They taught me and my generation how to profit from a strong work ethic. Yet, we need to stop punishing them for their desire to remain active. We need to recognize that many seniors want to work longer. We need to reward those who continue to work or operate a business. We can no longer force them to choose between an active and productive life and Social Security benefits.

Under current law, seniors between the ages of 65 and 69 lose \$1 in benefits for every dollar they earn over \$11,160. This earnings test amounts to an additional 33 percent marginal tax rate. This marginal rate is on top of the taxes they already pay on their earnings. This draconian test punishes seniors who want to work beyond the age of 64.

It is unconscionable that in times of shrinking fiscal resources at the Federal level, that we would punish seniors who seek to remain financially independent. With so severe an earnings limit we essentially force them to become more reliant on Government spending and congressional action. Such an unhealthy reliance undermines the self esteem of seniors and makes the governing role of Congress more difficult.

Our proposal today, would raise the earning potential of seniors to \$30,000 over 5 years

and more immediately they can earn \$15,000 beginning on January 1, 1996. This change goes a long way to providing equity to the hard working seniors of this great country and I am proud to be associated with it.

THE 7 YEAR BALANCED BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. RONALD D. COLEMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2491) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 105 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1996:

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Chairman, Republicans have not only targeted the sick, disabled, elderly, and women in this Congress, but now they are targeting children. Children do not have a voice in the legislature, but trust us to protect their interests. This Congress has betrayed that trust by waging an all-out war on children in the budget.

The battle has been waged on a number of different fronts: health care, disabled assistance, education, nutrition, and social safety nets.

In Texas, Medicaid coverage for as many as 206,641 children will be eliminated under Republican proposals by 2002. Currently, 20 percent of all children in Texas rely on Medicaid for their basic health needs. Medicaid pays for immunizations, regular checkups, and intensive care for about 1,407,000 children in Texas.

There are 148,287 El Pasoans who are eligible for Medicaid. Of those eligible, approximately 57,000 are children between the ages of 1 and 14.

The Republican budget also repeals the Vaccines for Children Program, putting at risk at least \$1.5 billion over 7 years that would otherwise provide immunizations for children in Texas and across the Nation. In the last few years, El Paso has been the site of several outbreaks of serious diseases such as tuberculosis and hepatitis. Without vaccines for contagious diseases, the health of the border region would be in great danger.

Children with disabilities are at risk as well. The Republican welfare plan denies as many as 54 percent of all disabled children in Texas SSI cash benefits in 2002.

Texas education programs are vitally important to sustain a good economy, and my Republican colleagues are set on destroying our educational system. In Texas, Head Start would be denied to 12,512 children in 2002 under the Republican budget. The cuts would also deny title I funding to 100,100 children in Texas.

Not only are we reducing funds in assisting education, but we are reducing the ability of administrators to keep their schools safe. The Republican budget cuts funding to the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program which supplies funding to 1,043 out of 1,053 school districts in Texas who use the money to keep crime, violence, and drugs away from the children in their schools.

Not only does the budget limit the opportunities students have, but it limits the opportuni-

ties they will have outside of school when they try to enter the work force. The budget will deny approximately 3,000 young people in Texas the opportunity to serve their community through AmeriCorps. And over 7 years, the Republican budget eliminates summer jobs for 297,437 youths in Texas.

In this family friendly Congress Republicans are picking and choosing what type of families they want to help. For example, the Republican welfare bill cuts foster care and adoption for vulnerable Texas children by \$359.5 million over 7 years and eliminates cash assistance for 5,260 children in Texas simply because they were born to unmarried mothers under 18. Additionally, assistance would be cut to 222,000 children in Texas simply because their paternity has not been established.

The effort to balance the budget should not include an unnecessary and harsh attack on children and their interests. They are the future of this country and we must treat them as assets, not liabilities.

THE 7 YEAR BALANCED BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2491) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 105 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1996:

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Chairman, I oppose this heinous attempt by the Republican majority to balance the budget at the expense of the Nation's elderly. This hysteria surrounding the mandate to balance the budget in 7 years is nothing short of a hoax being perpetrated on the American people to conceal the true Republican agenda. If the Republicans were so interested in balancing the Federal budget, would they be proposing a royalty holiday for major oil producers, many of whom are not even American companies? If the Republicans were truly interested in balancing the Federal budget, would they be proposing the elimination of the guaranteed minimum tax on corporations? Does it make sense to propose a \$242 billion tax cut if your objective is to balance the budget? How many of the American people know that the debate over balancing the budget is being conducted in an environment where half the budget isn't even on the table?

The result, Mr. Chairman, is that we have a program to revise Medicare which, like the entire Republican program, is regressive in the extreme. It gives special breaks to doctors; it increases premiums for people who can least afford it; it distorts medical financing systems, particularly of hospitals that serve the poor; it sets up dynamics that could lead to the concentration of the poorest and least healthy people in the most inadequate coverage. The Republicans have maintained that the premiums of the poorest elderly will continue to be paid, but this is just another deception. The very program which is responsible for paying these premiums is being eliminated under the Republican Medicaid reform package.